

My fellow colleagues, please join me in honoring the Cleveland Slovak Dramatic Club for their years of service to the Slovak community of the Cleveland area.

HONORS LISETTE BERNIER-McGOWAN FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

**HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 15, 1999*

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to honor the fine work and outstanding public service of Lisette Bernier-McGowan. Lisette is well deserving of our commendation after thirty years of service to the New Haven public school system and community.

Lisette was raised and educated in Puerto Rico, and upon her arrival in Connecticut recognized the need for greater bilingual education in our schools. She earned two Masters Degrees at Southern Connecticut State University, in Modern Foreign Languages and Elementary Bilingual Education, and set out to build a system of increased diversity within the public school curriculum and community. For more than two decades she has given her time and expertise for the good of New Haven young people.

Her knowledge in bilingual and english as a second language programs is highly regarded by other leaders in this field. She has served on the Commissioner's Task Force on Bilingual Education, the Superintendent's Task Force for Excellence in Education, the Yale Study Groups on Bilingual Education and Cultural Bias.

Most recently she has served as Director of two innovative education programs. The Bilingual Science Project is a comprehensive three-year teacher training program on effective strategies for the integration of science and language acquisition. The BRIDGE Project is a reform effort in three New Haven elementary schools in New Haven designed to provide rigorous literacy development. While leading these efforts, she concurrently served as Chair of the New Haven Public Schools Task Force on Bilingual Education. Her commitment to this issue has lead to real progress in developing and implementing sound bilingual education policy and curriculum.

Several local organizations have honored her consistent leadership in the community. Among her achievements, Lisette has been awarded the Bilingual Director of the Year, the Connecticut Latinas in Leadership Award, LULAC Award for Leadership in Education, and the YMCA Women in Leadership award. We are not the first to recognize Lisette's contribution, but I am proud to take this opportunity to join others in our community to honor this talented woman.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to rise today and join with family, friends, and the City of New Haven to pay tribute to Lisette Bernier-McGowan for outstanding service to our community. She has truly left a positive mark on New Haven that will benefit our schools and our young people for years to come. Educator, leader, and friend, Lisette's exceptional commitment and dedication have made her a model to which we can all aspire.

IN HONOR OF MR. JOSEPH CUNDARI FOR HIS DEDICATION TO HARRISON AND TO HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 15, 1999*

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the remarkable accomplishments of Mr. Joseph Cundari for his contributions to Harrison and Hudson County Community College.

Through his vast knowledge of engineering and his devotion to the community in which he was raised, Mr. Cundari has dedicated his life to the betterment of Harrison, NJ. From serving as Vice President of the West Hudson Hospital Association, 1958-1962, to serving as Vice President of the Harrison Board of Education, 1991-1996, Mr. Cundari consistently gave his time, energy, and resources in order to improve his surroundings.

Using his degree in civil engineering from Manhattan College, Mr. Cundari began his long career of serving his country and his community by enlisting in the United States Army. As Master Sergeant and Chief of Engineer Operations Section of the 341st Engineer Regiment, Mr. Cundari was instrumental in the construction of the Alaska Military Highway and in the reconstruction of railroad bridges devastated by WWII in France, Belgium, and Germany.

After leaving the military, Mr. Cundari returned to Harrison and was named Town Engineer by the New Jersey Engineering Department and Department of Construction Inspection. From March 1946 through the present, Mr. Cundari prepared plans and specifications for all public works projects involving the construction of new water mains, sanitary and storm sewers, and street improvements.

In addition to his work to improve the infrastructure of Harrison, Mr. Cundari was a leader on the issue of safety. He was proactive in formulating the police, fire alarm, and traffic signals for the town of Harrison.

Since 1990, Mr. Cundari has served on the Hudson County Community College Board of Trustees. Under his leadership as Chair of the Facilities Committee, the college initiated plans for campus development in Journal Square—an integral area in my district. His expertise and work for the college have been so essential to the growth of the college that he was named the HCCC's first trustee emeritus by the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

Mr. Cundari's efforts exemplify leadership and dedication to both the town of Harrison and Hudson County Community College. For these tremendous contributions to New Jersey and his example as a public servant, I am very happy to honor Mr. Cundari for his achievements. I salute and congratulate him on his extraordinary accomplishments.

**HOMEOWNERSHIP—LIVING THE AMERICAN DREAM**

**HON. BOB FILNER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 15, 1999*

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, and colleagues, I rise today in support of homeownership and

the mortgage interest tax deduction that makes it possible for millions of American families participate in the American Dream.

Today, when Americans are paying taxes and we debate changing the tax code, we need to be vigilant to protect the part of the code that helps millions to improve their lives and secure their future.

Two-thirds of all American families own their own homes—a rate that would be impossible without the mortgage interest deduction.

Homeownership is essential to the strength and vitality of America, providing a foundation of family security, stability and prosperity. Our communities are strengthened because of the pride of ownership and the vested interest homeowners have in their neighborhoods.

So today, let us vow to protect the mortgage interest tax deduction, and help to guarantee a strong future for American families and communities.

**THE INTRODUCTION OF THE WORKING AMERICANS WAGE RESTORATION ACT**

**HON. GEORGE R. NETHERCUTT, JR.**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 15, 1999*

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, this week, most Americans will pay their federal income tax. In total, individuals will spend about 1.7 billion hours to try to comply with the tax code. Businesses will spend 3.4 billion hours. That is equivalent to a "staff" of 3 million people working full-time, year-round, just on taxes. For Washington State residents, the average total tax burden will rise from \$10,307 in 1997 to \$10,634, making Washington the state with the tenth highest per capita tax burden.

Our colleague in the Senate, Senator JOHN ASHCROFT, and I believe this is too much, that working Americans know better how to spend their money than the Government does. So I am pleased today, with Senator ASHCROFT to introduce the Working Americans Wage Restoration Act.

The bill will eliminate the double taxation on the employee's share of the Social Security payroll tax. It would not affect the Social Security Trust Fund in any way.

Over the last 50 years, the Social Security employer-employee payroll tax has grown from 2% to 15%. As a result, almost three-quarters of all families now pay more in total Social Security payroll taxes than they pay in income taxes. These payroll taxes are inherently unfair because workers are taxed twice on the same income. Americans are taxed first as a portion of their gross income for federal income tax purposes and a second time for their contribution to the Social Security Trust Fund.

By allowing workers to deduct their share of Social Security contributions from their federal taxes, the Working Americans Wage Restoration Act will eliminate this double taxation and allow the workers who generated the economic growth to keep more of the money they earn.

Currently, businesses and employers are permitted to deduct their share of the payroll tax as a business expense, but workers are not. Individuals should have this same opportunity. My legislation would provide the same

benefit to individuals that businesses already enjoy.

I urge my colleagues to support the Working Americans Wage Restoration Act.

IN HONOR OF PATRICK SWEENEY

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 15, 1999*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Patrick Sweeney for 35 years of public service.

Mr. Sweeney began his career as a legislator in 1967 in the Ohio House of Representatives. In 1974 he was elected Assistant Majority Leader. Four years later he was elected as chair of the Education Section and as Vice Chairman of the House Finance and Appropriations Committee. In 1984, Mr. Sweeney was named Majority Whip. He later served as Minority Leader of the Ohio House where he left in 1996 to serve as State Senator of the 23rd District. Mr. Sweeney currently serves as an advisor and co-professor at Cleveland State University.

Mr. Sweeney achieved many accomplishments for the Cleveland area while in office. He brought millions of state dollars home for various projects, including the renovation of Playhouse Square and Cleveland State University's 17-18th Street Project, which included a new law library and a new business school building. Mr. Sweeney has also been supportive of the arts and theaters in the downtown area.

Patrick has been a dear friend, colleague and mentor for many years. I have tremendous respect for him as a legislator. I was very pleased that he succeeded me as State Senator of the 23rd District when I was elected to Congress. It gives me great pleasure to publicly recognize the achievements of Mr. Sweeney.

My fellow colleagues, please join me in honoring Patrick Sweeney for his 35 years of Public Service. He will be saluted for his achievements at a dinner by the Cuyahoga County Democratic Party.

IN HONOR OF TERENCE FREITAS

**HON. SAM FARR**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 15, 1999*

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Terence Freitas. Terence was kidnapped in Colombia on February 25th, and slain while working on behalf of the rights of indigenous people. As a humanitarian and environmentalist, he leaves behind a legacy of activism and passion that inspires us all.

Terence graduated from the University of California at Santa Cruz in 1997 with a dual degree in biology and environmental studies. He was a conservation biologist and policy analyst, with extensive field experience in temperate and tropical rainforests. While at the University of California at Santa Cruz, Terence was an active member of the community. He was involved in numerous campus activities

and helped to redesign the Crown College core course. Crown College is naming its college service award after him. In addition, an endowment has been established in his name to support the research of environmental studies at UCSC.

Terence also worked as an environmental consultant, researching American Indian Law and U.S. environmental policy. He was a long-time advocate for indigenous people and worked with Native American tribes while he was a student. His passions for working with marginalized cultures lead him in 1997, to the U'wa people in Colombia where he and two companions were on a mission to preserve the culture of the U'wa Indians.

The U'wa Tribe is fighting a battle to defend their rights and traditional territory. Ever dedicated to the fight for indigenous rights, Terence willingly put aside concern for his own safety and went to an area with one of the highest rates of documented human rights abuses, where violence, kidnappings and executions are part of everyday life. No one outside Colombia did more for the U'wa people than did Terence.

Terence helped to establish the U'wa Defense Working Group and lived life passionately. His fight will be continued by fellow activists, and Terence will be missed by all of those whose lives he touched. The loss of his young, vibrant life, is a tragedy for the whole world. The global humanitarian effort has suffered greatly with the passing of Terence Freitas.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM PEACE TAX FUND BILL

**HON. JOHN LEWIS**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 15, 1999*

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, one of the fundamental liberties of our country is freedom of religion. The right to exercise our religious beliefs free of government coercion. The Federal Government must not force a citizen to act against his or her religious beliefs.

Because of their strong religious convictions, some Americans do not pay their taxes. They do not pay their taxes because their religion forbids them from supporting war. Seventeen cents out of every tax dollar received by the Federal Government is spent on the military.

This military spending is inconsistent with the religious beliefs of hundreds and thousands of Americans. Because of their strong beliefs, these people would rather disobey their government than disobey their God or their beliefs. As a disciple of Ghandi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, preachings on non-violence, I understand the difficult choice these Americans face.

That is why I am introducing this legislation. The Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund would allow religious and conscientious objectors to pay their taxes without violating their religious beliefs. These taxpayers would have their tax payments placed in the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund. Money from this fund could not be spent for military purposes. Religious objectors would be assured that their tax payment would not increase military spending—that paying taxes would not violate their religious beliefs.

The Joint Committee on Taxation has determined that the Religious Freedom and Peace Tax Fund legislation is a slight revenue raiser. The bill will not reduce military spending. It simply will allow thousands more Americans to pay their taxes in good conscience.

VFW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY  
WINNING ESSAY FROM HAWAII

**HON. PATSY T. MINK**

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 15, 1999*

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I have the great honor to request permission to insert in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the text of the winning essay from Hawaii entitled "My Service to America," by Carmen M. Herlihy, in the 1998-99 VFW Voice of Democracy Scholarship Competition.

MY SERVICE TO AMERICA

(By Carmen Herlihy)

It was a little over two hundred years ago that a tremendous thing happened. Freedom was born. The birth of the United States Constitution was perhaps one of the most important occurrences in our country's history. In that mother of freedom there sprung a child of the future, the Bill of Rights. These 10 amendments have been the backbone of the growth of modern society. People have lived in the comfort of knowing that they will always be there, for they have always been there. But as the population continues to grow, and differences in culture have sprung up, perhaps the existence of the freedom that we as citizens have taken for granted will slowly be taken right out of our patriotic hand.

It would be a lie to say that we live in a country that grants us complete freedom. After all, complete freedom would lead to chaos. Therefore laws were created to protect the well-being of all citizens. But we are privileged enough to live in a country that allows us to voice our opinions freely, worship in what we choose, and defend ourselves when necessary.

As I watch television broadcast of the unfortunate occurrences in places such as Kosovo, where people as young as children are being killed; Northern Ireland, where a 300 year old conflict has yet to be solved and China where oppression is not openly accepted, but expected by all, I thank the spirits of our founding fathers for their bravery and loyalty in the belief that a country that enables its citizens to grow, is a country that must be formed.

We as citizens of this great land have an obligation to fulfill; that obligation is to live out our reputation as being the land of opportunity and freedom, equality for all. It is a journey we must make in order to continue the tradition of freedom and basic human rights. The first of many battles is at hand.

On November third 19 hundred and ninety eight, a choice will have to be made by the citizens of a small state floating in the middle of the pacific ocean. Many people will vote on that issue without fully understanding the concept its carries out. To some it means saving the idea of traditional marriage, to other it means saving the constitution of the United States. Whatever the truth may be, another issue lies beneath the surface, one that many people would rather overlook. It is question of freedom.

Homosexuality. A word often said beneath ones breath. The thing about the word homosexuality that always amused me was the